

**To:** Enck, Judith[Enck.Judith@epa.gov]  
**Cc:** Plevin, Lisa[Plevin.Lisa@epa.gov]; LaPosta, Dore[LaPosta.Dore@epa.gov]; McKenna, Douglas[McKenna.Douglas@epa.gov]; Matthews, Joan[Matthews.Joan@epa.gov]; Gratz, Jeff[Gratz.Jeff@epa.gov]; Durack, Patrick[Durack.Patrick@epa.gov]; Kluesner, Dave[kluesner.dave@epa.gov]; Martin, John[Martin.JohnJ@epa.gov]  
**From:** Mears, Mary  
**Sent:** Fri 3/18/2016 3:37:48 PM  
**Subject:** RE: Time sensitive. Re: Star Ledger article re: Newark "turned down" EPA's help in 2003

Adding John Martin.

Mary Mears  
Deputy Director Public Affairs and Chief Public Outreach Branch  
U.S. EPA Region 2 (NJ, NY, PR, the US VI and eight Indian Nations)  
(212) 637-3673 (Direct Office)  
(212) 637-3660 (General Office)  
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**From:** Enck, Judith  
**Sent:** Friday, March 18, 2016 11:32 AM  
**To:** Mears, Mary <Mears.Mary@epa.gov>  
**Cc:** Plevin, Lisa <Plevin.Lisa@epa.gov>; LaPosta, Dore <LaPosta.Dore@epa.gov>; McKenna, Douglas <McKenna.Douglas@epa.gov>; Matthews, Joan <Matthews.Joan@epa.gov>; Gratz, Jeff <Gratz.Jeff@epa.gov>; Durack, Patrick <Durack.Patrick@epa.gov>; Kluesner, Dave <kluesner.dave@epa.gov>  
**Subject:** Time sensitive. Re: Star Ledger article re: Newark "turned down" EPA's help in 2003

Re 2003. I just received a call from commissioner Martin who asked what exactly did EPA offer and what did Newark decline. I explained the voluntary 3T program and that we did not offer money. Dore, can deca please send me an email today explaining what region 2 did in the Newark public schools. I will forward it to NJDEP today. I am sure pad will also find it useful. Thanks

Sent from my iPhone

On Mar 18, 2016, at 11:17 AM, Mears, Mary <[Mears.Mary@epa.gov](mailto:Mears.Mary@epa.gov)> wrote:

Yes, as Doug knows we continue to get inquiries. We offered assistance and gave them information, but at the time they said they didn't need further help. This is a voluntary program, so we can't force schools to accept our help.

Mary Mears  
Deputy Director Public Affairs and Chief Public Outreach Branch  
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**From:** Plevin, Lisa  
**Sent:** Friday, March 18, 2016 11:11 AM  
**To:** Enck, Judith <[Enck.Judith@epa.gov](mailto:Enck.Judith@epa.gov)>; LaPosta, Dore <[LaPosta.Dore@epa.gov](mailto:LaPosta.Dore@epa.gov)>; Mears, Mary <[Mears.Mary@epa.gov](mailto:Mears.Mary@epa.gov)>; McKenna, Douglas <[McKenna.Douglas@epa.gov](mailto:McKenna.Douglas@epa.gov)>; Matthews, Joan <[Matthews.Joan@epa.gov](mailto:Matthews.Joan@epa.gov)>; Gratz, Jeff <[Gratz.Jeff@epa.gov](mailto:Gratz.Jeff@epa.gov)>  
**Subject:** Star Ledger article re: Newark "turned down" EPA's help in 2003

For your awareness of coverage

Lisa J. Plevin  
Chief of Staff, USEPA Reg. 2  
290 Broadway  
NY, NY 10007  
212-637-5000

# Newark turned down EPA's 2003 offer to help lower lead levels, report says

[PrintEmail](#)

<image001.png>By Jessica Mazzola | NJ Advance Media for NJ.com

[Email the author](#) | [Follow on Twitter](#)

on March 17, 2016 at 10:58 PM, updated March 18, 2016 at 7:14 AM

<image002.png>Newark schools reportedly declined federal help in 2003. (File photo)

**NEWARK** — Elevated levels of lead have been present in the drinking water at Newark Public Schools for more than a decade, and according to a new report, the district previously refused federal help to deal with the issue.

According to a WNYC report, Environmental Protection Agency officials say the federal outfit worked with Newark to identify a lead issue in the schools buildings' drinking water back in 2003. When the EPA offered to help remediate the issue, the district refused, saying it already had a remediation program in place, the EPA told WNYC.

Current school district officials have been scrambling to find past test results in light of elevated lead levels that were revealed in 2015 tests. Thursday night, the district released results for the last three school years, which showed elevated levels dated back that far.

Marion Bolden, who led the district from 1999 to 2008, told WNYC the district aggressively addressed the issue at the time, via methods like water fountain replacement and faucet flushing. The district also conducted regular testing and alerted parents when levels were elevated, she said in the report.

School employees have alleged that filters have not been properly maintained. Thursday, the state released a document outlining new testing and remediation methods, saying they were necessary in light of "uncertainty" about past practices in the district.

The city began testing students' blood lead levels Thursday. Re-testing water lead levels at all of the district's 82 locations is set to begin Saturday.